

The background is a deep blue gradient with a subtle pattern of white dots. Overlaid on this are several concentric circles and arcs in a lighter blue color. Some of these arcs have degree markings, such as 40, 150, 160, 170, 180, 190, 200, 210, 220, 230, 240, 250, and 260. There are also small white arrows pointing in various directions, suggesting a sense of rotation or movement. The overall aesthetic is technical and modern.

THE SEVEN AGES OF MAN, FROM *AS YOU LIKE IT*

BY ME (HANNAH LITZELMANN)

THE SEVEN AGES OF MAN

Before I explain all seven ages, you must know the metaphor behind the “Seven Ages of Man”.

The metaphor is:

“All the world's a stage,

And all the men and women merely players:

They have their exits and their entrances;

And one man in his time plays many parts,

His acts being seven ages.”

This means that the world is a stage (like in a theatre), and that everyone is an actor on the stage. Everyone has their exits and entrances (everyone is born and dies), and everyone that lives long enough experiences the seven ages.

All in all, this means that life is like a play.





THE FIRST AGE

“At first the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse's
arms”

This means the first age is a newborn baby that cries and vomits. It also means that the first age is young, and innocent, with a whole life ahead of it. This is the “entrance” onto the stage of life.



THE SECOND AGE

“And then the whining schoolboy, with his
satchel,
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school.”

This means that the second age is a schoolboy, walking to school as slowly as possible, because he doesn't want to go. His face could either be shining from happiness, but that's unlikely, because it says that he's unwilling to go. It could also be shining because it's been washed, so it's all clean and sparkly, or it could be shining from tears.

THE THIRD AGE

“And then the lover,
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad
Made to his mistress’ eyebrow”

The third age is mature, in love.

It says he’s written a ballad (poem) about his mistress’ (girlfriend’s) eyebrow. Shakespeare might be mocking poets for writing mournful love poems about ridiculous things, like their lover’s eyebrows.





THE FOURTH AGE

"Then a soldier,
Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble reputation
Even in the cannon's mouth."

In the fourth age he is a fully grown man with a beard, like a pard (leopard), and is now working as a soldier. He's made oaths to his country, and he wishes to be the most honoured. He is seeking a 'bubble reputation', which means he is doing things to make himself look good even if they are pointless. He seeks his reputation 'even in the cannon's mouth', which means he'll even stand in front of guns just to be respected. He also gets into arguments without thinking about the consequences.

In this age he has become obsessed with what people think about him.



THE FIFTH AGE

“And then the justice,
In fair round belly with good capon lined,
With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances;
And so he plays his part.”

Now he is older, and he gets what he deserves. He's got a fat round belly lined with capon (an expensive castrated rooster). It could also mean that he has become fat, round and impotent, like a capon.

The man is now mature and wise, with a knowledge of justice.

THE SIXTH AGE

“The sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slippered pantaloon,
With spectacles on nose and pouch on side,
His youthful hose well saved, a world too wide
For his shrunk shank; and his big manly voice,
Turning again toward childish treble, pipes
And whistles in his sound.”

At this age, the man is no longer mighty and great, but feeble; his trousers are too big, he needs spectacles, he's shrinking, and his voice has gone from that of a strong man to that of a child.



THE SEVENTH AGE

'Last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is second childishness, and mere oblivion,
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans
everything.'

The seventh age is the last age. It is the age where he dies. It ends his "strange eventful history", so in other words his life is over. He is "Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything", so he has nothing, and *is* nothing, because he has died.

